

LCA Public Comments
May 28, 2003 – Lafayette
General Session

1. (Sherril Sagrera) What happens if CWPPRA is not re-authorized? If the big (WRDA-size) projects are removed, does it assure the survival of CWPPRA? I am concerned that LCA may include non-environmental projects like St. Charles Airport, Millennium Port, and Morganza-to-the-Gulf. If you ask me for \$5 to buy bread for your family, and I give you \$5, I better not see you come out of the store with a case of beer. The western side of Subprovince 3 has no Mississippi River influence.

Response: The program is flexible and have to consider Adaptive Management.

2. (Charles Broussard) It is important to preserve what we have i.e. Vermilion Parish. Agriculture is the #1 pillar of the economy. Too much salt enters around Leland-Bowman Locks, affecting rice, crawfish, and cattle. What can you do right now to help Vermilion Parish with this problem?

Response: Will talk to Operations Division at the Corps.

3. (Rich Major) When can we expect to see something actually built with this project?

Response: explaining cost sharing and 2006 starters; also explained the issues and reauthorizing Davis Pond.

4. (Gary Kingsley, ULL) The ship is sinking. If everyone bails, we can delay it, but it will still sink. Is terminology leading people to believe that things will be done that can't be done? Don't use restoration.

Response: The team has struggled with the terminology.

5. (Judge Edwards) Think we can maintain our lifestyles. We are sinking. We've got to make wise use of resources. What is mouth bar?

Response: Mouth bars are the locks.

6. (Ted Beaulieu) Who chooses the final 10 alternatives?

Response: The team will gather public input and the Corps and DNR will then decide.

BREAKOUT SESSION: SUBPROVINCE 3

1. Concerned that Point au fer Reef restoration may interfere with Atchafalaya Mud Stream that is responsible for accreting land along the Vermillion Parish Gulf Shoreline.

Response: The reef could not be a barrier to water flow and mud stream sediments are fine-grained sediments in suspension and would not be deposited in the delta.

2. Plan does not increase Atchafalaya River flows in GIWW west of Wax Lake Outlet.

Response: That will occur under future with no action as the deltas in Atch. Bays expand and result in higher water levels in the GIWW.

3. Concerned that Vermilion Parish (represented by Sherrill Sagrera) wetlands are not being enhanced as in Terrebonne Basin. The keystone strategies adopted by the LCA do not address many of the localized problems such as shoreline erosion.

Response: Vermilion Parish wetlands in Sub Province 3 are relatively healthy and CWPPRA can address smaller problems.

4. Why develop alternatives that would not result in no net loss?

Response: Public may not accept some of resulting adverse impacts associated with a no net loss alternative.

5. Acadiana Bay Association (ABA – represented by Ted Beaulieu) is very supportive of rebuilding reefs to protect the bays and waterways in the Teche/Vermilion Basin.

6. Why under the Reduce Alternative is there not an alternative that contains barrier island restoration and diversions?

Response: Because the frameworks focus on different processes and have a target acreage that limits numbers of measures. The maintain 01 alternative contains both frameworks.

7. ABA is disappointed that the alternatives do not address protecting bays west of Atchafalaya Bay from the Atchafalaya River influence such as increasing freshwater and sediment transport. They would favor a lock in the GIWW between WLO and the Jaws.

Response: That influence is positive for area wetlands and is not creating flooding problems in developed areas. The Corps periodically evaluates the impacts of the Atchafalaya River influence on this area.

8. Vermilion parish desires a measure to raise or rebuild bar mouth for Southwest Pass, similar to measures in SubProvince 4. It wants to increase Atch. Influence and decrease Gulf influence in western portion of SubProvince 3.

Response: The Southwest Pass bar has not been dredged for ship channels as has for Calcasieu and Sabine passes. The Southwest Pass area is very stable according to coastal geologists familiar with the area.

9. How will funding distribute restoration measures coastwide?

10. Vermillion Parish and ABA support coastwide distribution of restoration measures and also contends that the more cost-effective measures should be selected.
11. ABA is willing to trade some of the desired salinity targets for brackish salinity habitats associated with the Atchafalaya River influence (to maintain wetlands).
12. ABA Supports Maintain 1 alternative because it is most comprehensive and includes the favored measure, Point au Fer Reef restoration.
13. Vermilion Parish Interests: The plan should contain additional shoreline erosion control measures along the western side of Vermilion Bay and the Gulf shoreline between Southwest Pass and Chenier au Tigre.
14. Vermillion Parish supports the Maintain 1 alternative because it benefits the greatest area.

In general, the commenters were satisfied with SubProvince 3 alternatives and the approach of the study. Specifically, some commenters wished that the alternatives would have included more measures addressing their localized problems in addition to measures addressing keystone strategies.

The commenters favored

- 1) selection of more cost-effective projects;
- 2) Distribution of restoration measures coastwide;
- 3) The Maintain Alternative over the Reduce Alternatives

BREAKOUT SESSION: SUBPROVINCE 4

Lead: Darryl Clark

Note Taker: Melanie Goodman, USACE-MVN-PM-C

The attendance for this group was very small starting out with Judge Edwards, Robert Dubois.

Two poster displays illustrating information on the six alternatives and thier potential effects this province indicated that , one included six maps

Daryl explained what the poster displays represented. There are six alternatives that would target one of two general results: 1) maintenance within the sub province with no net loss over 50 years (includes four of the alternatives) or 2) enhancement with a net gain of wetlands over 50 years (includes (2 of the alternatives).

Judge Edwards asked why the results on all of the graphs comparing the impacts of the different alternatives were the same. Daryl explained that the hydrologic box models used to assess the alternatives operate on one benefit at a time, lump separate areas together, and are very crude.

Robert Dubois (I think) suggested using E.M. Macillis Model (spelling).

Judge Edwards requested that we do something about rebuilding the levees (banks) at the North Prong of Schooner Bayou along the GIWW and the area at the Leeland Bowman Lock. Daryl said this is a project that should be deferred to Linda Mathies.

On the topic of freshwater introduction from White and Grand lakes:

Judge Edwards stressed that the only time there is enough water available in White Lake is during a heavy rainfall, when there is already [enough fresh] water every where.

He said its not going to make much difference in the water level in the lake. He referenced statements in the "Introduction to Subprovince Alternatives for the LCA Study", page 19 first and second paragraphs stating that they were not accurate. Judge recommended that a reservoir be constructed north of GIWW to hold 12-20" rains to prevent lake from filling up too quickly, reserves water for later use, reduces need to tap into Chicot aquifer for irrigation (which is expensive).

Judge Edwards went on asking about "Reef Bars", and mouth bar at Southwest Pass and Oaks Avery Canal? Daryl discussed how the natural function would be replaced by a structure, that the channel itself wouldn't be blocked due to navigation and fisheries issues.

Chad Courville, Ducks Unlimited asked how the permit Controls around the lakes would realistically be constructed. Daryl discussed Adler gate design with fish bays (Oyster Bayou structure to control salinities).

Chad expressed concerned that the LCA efforts may independently come up with solutions while some other entity (such as Ducks Unlimited) may have been investigation and pursuing a separate solution.

Judge Edwards said that there is not as much salt water in Vermilion as there is in Calcasieu, but 600 acres of marsh were burnt/killed because of a channel that the Corps built. He recommended that LCA add a measure to place a levee on west bank of Fresh Water Bayou (FWB) for Sub Province 4 and on east bank of FWB for Sub Prov 3.

Judge talked about problems he has had with getting a DNR permit to armor FWB Canal himself and that LCA should coordinate an effort with Corps and DNR regulatory agencies to establish a consistency determination to speed up the permitting process (e.g., if the plan says that fixing the bank lines along FWB is consistent with LCA, but may not necessarily be a funded measure it may help the permitting process).

Judge recommended extending the Gulf Shoreline Stabilization component of Alternatives E1, E2, E3 and M2 to Dewitt Canal to prevent scour on the east end.

Sue Hawes addressed the group about the idea of some folks in the east that the problems in Sub Province 4 aren't bad enough and the benefits from the alternatives aren't sufficient enough and the province should just be dropped from the program.

Discussion moved around to the bar graphs again and how the US FWS habitat models (HSI?) results indicate that most species do better off without restoration and that intuitively that is not correct.

Chad talked about Dabbling Duck models and said Barry Wilson, Gulf Coast Joint Venture for the Coast of Texas, MS, AL, FL, does duck modeling for specific marsh habitats and duck spp, and has detailed information on restoration techniques for water fowl foraging in Mississippi River coastal wetlands and the Chenier Plain.

Contact information for Barry Wilson is 337- and he is located at the USGS Annex in Lafayette.